

Intercom

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US Army Corps
of Engineers ®
Walla Walla District



The Corps would
rather drop the
castle drawbridge
for youth than
wait out a long
siege.

See pages 6 and 7.

Fling fath flung.

FROM WHERE I SIT

Moving forward while maneuvering through USACE initiatives

Those who say it can't be done are usually interrupted by others doing it.

Joel A. Barker

Change. Mere mention of the word often sends waves of concern through any workforce. Our District is no exception. But when you really think about it, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has been an organization of change since its inception in 1802. The fact that there are numerous USACE initiatives either planned or being executed, all within a short time period, adds to the challenges—and impacts our District.

Overall, I'm pleased with the work the District is doing in implementing the USACE Initiatives and fully recognize there is more work to be done. I know this has added to our workload but I am confident in the fact that we are doing a solid job maneuvering through these initiatives while still maintaining focus on our day-to-day missions. From my various discussions with employees I'm pleased with the "can-do" and positive attitude you've taken as we continue to move forward. This type of attitude goes a long way in tackling tough issues. Don't panic, keep pecking away with implementation and keep moving forward just as we're doing!

Is it challenging? You bet. Is it insurmountable? No way. I'm fully confident in our abilities to get it done and know that these "start-up" costs will be high. But these costs won't continue forever.

In challenging times it's imperative that we concentrate on the fundamentals to ensure everyone is moving in the same direction. With respect to our District, these "fundamentals" are our Five District Priorities, which are:

1. Mission Accomplishment

2. Taking Care of District Employees and Family Members
3. Customer Focus
4. Training and Leader Development

5. Safety On and Off Duty
These priorities are not new. I've communicated them at Town Halls, at every District site and they've been posted on the District Intranet for months. Given that these conditions have been set, my expectation is simple—I expect everyone in the District to know what these priorities are and to apply them to your specific job.

The more we do this, the more we'll enjoy success because we have control over these priorities.

There will always be challenges that will test our resolve to focus on these priorities. Simply knowing what these challenges are is half the battle in overcoming them. Knowing these

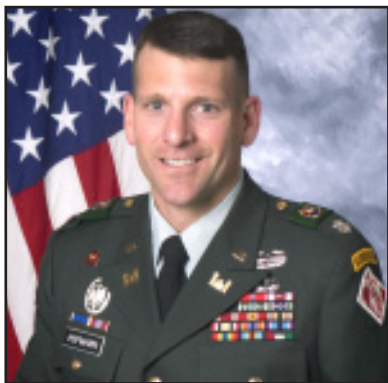
challenges allow us to properly plan our work while still maintaining focus on our priorities. Our near-term challenges in the District are:

1. Key Leader Transitions: The District is transitioning several key positions. With change comes opportunities. I know the new leaders selected for these positions will provide the positive, caring leadership essential for the District's long-term success.

2. Support to GWOT/Contingencies: This necessity will continue long into the future. Don't tie GWOT support to just Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom. USACE currently has personnel in 90-plus countries. The Corps will continue to play a worldwide role.

3. NSPS: The advent of NSPS is here. Supervisors are navigating through the

See INITIATIVES, Page 11.



Lt. Col. Tony Hofmann

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On the Cover...



photo: Rick Haverinen

Justin Weeks, 17, a junior at Walla Walla High School, watches the clay pellet just shot from his model trebuchet on Feb. 27. Engineering problems included a method to release the pellet at the critical time for greatest flight distance. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers supports school build-it competitions that include some challenges to lure young people to the engineering field and the Corps.

Corps-wide contracting practices get new design



photo: Gina Baltrusch

Sandra Riley, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Director of Contracting, visited Walla Walla District last month and presented a briefing to District employees on March 8 about the USACE Contracting Transformation Effort. Riley told the audience that the Business Transformation Taskforce's Charter is to transform the contracting infrastructure and business processes by recommending improved business practices and clarity of responsibilities to more effectively implement the contracting mission within USACE. Riley said this would be done by: 1) refocusing HQ's efforts to operate strategically by providing policy, program evaluation, and workforce development oversight; 2) realigning contracting advocacy and expertise near mission execution by delegating the Principal Assistant Responsible for Contracting (PARC) responsibilities to multiple locations; 3) addressing the reporting chain for the contracting community; and 4) developing a contracting surge plan. Riley went on to discuss the responsibilities of HQs, the three new PARCs, to be located in Atlanta, Dallas, and Winchester, and the Regional Contracting Chiefs/Center Contracting Chiefs.

Summary by Julie Dockery, Small Business Office

Information Management services revamped as A-76 deploys

There will soon be two new IM organizations in Walla Walla. A local Corps of Engineers Directorate of Corporate Information (CECI) representative, Steve Torretta, has been selected as the Regional Information Officer.

The second is the organization that will be performing the duties most people associate with the IMO. Army Corps of Engineers Information Technology (ACE-IT) will have a combination of government employees and contract personnel.

ACE-IT will perform all functions in the Performance Work Statement, including Automation, Communications, Information Assurance, Records Management, Printing/Publication, Visual Information and IM/IT Management.

The PWS contract specifies a one-year transition, so the Notice to Proceed could be issued June 1, 2007 and the transition year would be complete on May 31, 2008. As of June 1, 2008, all positions in ACE-IT will have been staffed and performance of IMIT

services assumed. This begins the performance phase and there are four option years as part of the contract award.

The significant difference is that the Corps is moving to an enterprise service model which will mean services will be more consistent and standardized. Some services will be paid for on a cost reimbursable basis.

The goal is to transition to this new environment without a loss of services or a degradation in service levels.

Changes in logistics management add up to familiar faces doing familiar jobs

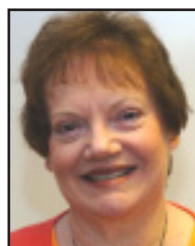
By Betty Asbjornsen

Walla Walla District logistics employees were assigned to the USACE Logistics Activity (ULA) on April 1. At this time, all logistics personnel are under supervisory and administrative control of the ULA. The NWW commander retains operational control of NWW-LM employees who will perform duties in support of Walla Walla District.

Eventually you will notice changes, such as hand receipt holder and receiving agent appointment letters will come from the property book officer assigned to our district; three-year cyclic inventories; property less than \$5000 will be dropped from the property book and managed as durable property; TDY oversight done from the Logistics Activity Center (LAC), etc. For the most part, you will continue to pass documents and needs to LM, also called the Local Delivery Point (LDP).

The ULA organizational structure and employees are — **Local Delivery Point (LDP)**, Walla Walla District: Betty Asbjornsen, Lead Logistics Management Specialist; Tami

Vance, Facilities Specialist; Dave VanDewark, Supply Technician (property functions); Orin Thomas, Supply Technician (disposal); Transportation Assistant, John Blom will remain as a reemployed annuitant until a Transportation Assistant is



Betty Asbjornsen

hired. **Regional Logistics Liaison (RLL)**: Karen McKenna, at Portland Division, first level supervisor of all CENWD Lead Logistics Management Specialists. **Logistics Activity Center (LAC)**, Millington, Tenn.: Bob Minden, Transportation Assistant, working virtually here in NWW; The Walla Walla District Property Book Officer vice Asbjornsen will be organizationally

located at the LAC, but may be working virtually from somewhere else.

For more information contact Betty Asbjornsen, lead logistics management specialist, (509) 527-7050.

Corps visits Native Peoples at Celilo to observe anniversary



photo by Matt Rabe, Portland District



Clockwise from above: Lt. Gen. Carl Strock, Chief of Engineers, presents an award to Rebecca A. Miles, Chairman, Nez Perce Tribal Executive Committee; salmon fishing at Celilo Falls over 50 years ago; Walla Walla District Commander Lt. Col. Anthony Hofmann visits with Dan Growt from the Yakama Nation-owned ambulance service; Karan Matta, left, Yakama descendant, and Geraldine Jim, Warm Springs Tribe, cook salmon traditionally over alder wood.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers joined tribes March 10 in observing the 50th anniversary of the inundation of Celilo Falls and Celilo Village.

Chief of Engineers Lt. Gen. Carl S. Strock represented the Corps at Celilo Village near the Dalles, Ore., at an event hosted by several native nations and tribes, to remember the day, precisely 50 years earlier, when the Native Americans' traditional life way dramatically changed.

The spillway gates of the new Dalles Dam were closed on March 10, 1957. As the pool filled, Celilo Falls and the original Celilo Village vanished beneath the water, but not from memory.

Countless generations of native peoples gathered at Celilo Falls to harvest salmon, to trade with others, and to make spiritual observances. The Falls not only supported livelihood, but visually and audibly demonstrated the Columbia River's tremendous power.

The dam construction required the Corps to relocate the native village. The buildings and infrastructure have degraded over the past 50 years, and Strock's March 10 visit re-confirmed the federal government's commitment to improve living conditions.



U.S. Army Corps of Engineers photo



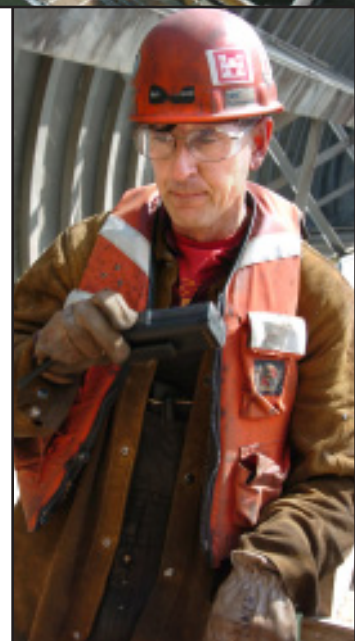
photo by Matt Rabe, Portland District



photos: Rick Haverinen

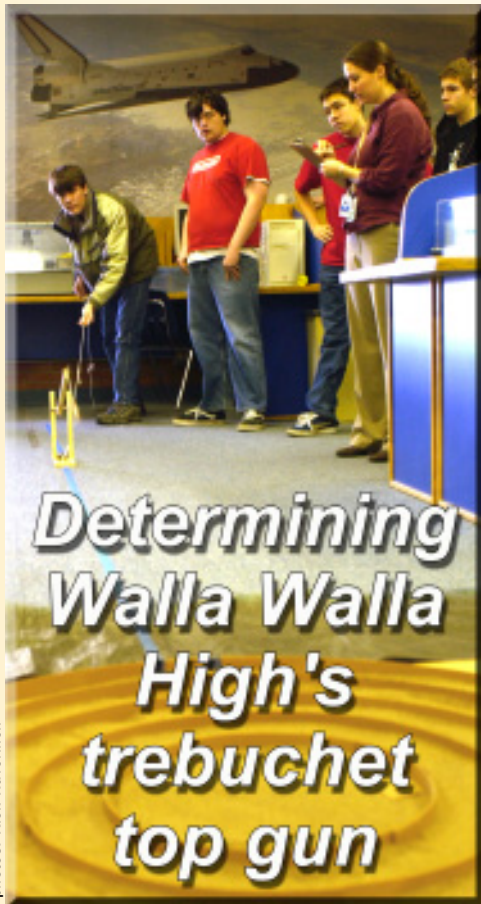


It wasn't on the same scale as the reaction to Hurricane Katrina in 2005, but when the hinges on both sides of the lock Tainter gate broke away from their mounts at Little Goose Lock and Dam on March 21, there was an instant U.S. Army Corps of Engineers push to make the lock operable. Walla Walla District got help from Knight Construction which mobilized a crew to lift and stow the damaged gate, so barge traffic could pass while permanent repairs can be made. The cause of the failure is under Corps investigation. *Clockwise from top:* Norm McKinsey of Knight Construction lowers a line as the gate was being lifted on April 3; attaching a temporary trunnion plate to an arm of the damaged gate, Knight welder Jared Thompson listens to a topside coworker, while hardware details of the failed south side mount are visible on the right; the Tainter gate was very much in the way resting on the lock's upper sill on March 29; Knight welder Nate Johnson radios for more electrical distribution gear to be dropped to him; Phil Rider, upper right, issues instructions to Gene Crothers, standing atop the floating bulkhead; and the first barges to enter the lock after the Tainter gate failure are accommodated around 5 p.m., April 4. The gray floating bulkhead, which saved the day to permit at least some lockage, is between the barges and a corner of the primer paint-colored former beach landing craft used to maneuver the bulkhead's position.



Youth gets its fling at

If retirement thins the Corps crowd



photos: Rick Haverinen

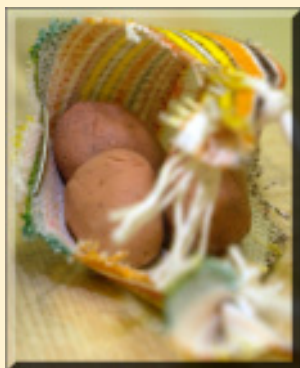
Determining Walla Walla High's trebuchet top gun

By Rick Haverinen

The take-no-prisoners reality is that some of the most experienced minds in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers have the inconvenient habit of retiring.

Those empty chairs indicate a lot of knowledge has also slipped out the door with the former occupants. Their open positions will be promotion opportunities for engineers now a bit less senior in the Corps, and a large wheel will revolve cog by cog as responsibilities advance within the organization.

It can be reassuring to know the Corps has



been engineering its supply of new engineers.

In fact, the Corps informally woos people to the career field and uses structured programs to recruit and train students and graduates of formal engineering studies.

The informal courtship part can be seen in high schools, often during National Engineers Week, which in 2007 was Feb. 18-24.

This year Walla Walla District trotted out its model trebuchet-building program to area schools. The trebuchet was a medieval siege engine used by attacking armies to hurl huge boulders at castles in order to force a surrender. It is a pivoting arm with an extremely heavy counterweight that hurls a projectile held by a sling. The model trebuchets built by area school students are about a foot tall and the project included some engineering problems, such as how to rig a release mechanism that would best propel an object.

After the kids had finished their work, Walla Walla District engineers visited the schools for an afternoon of hurling clay pellets at a target. It was a competitive event, with scores assigned to teams for distance and accuracy.

"I think it's excellent," said

John Herr, who teaches drafting, design and applied technology at Walla Walla High School. "I like the kids to see that all their work in reading, writing, math, science has some application. It's problem solving."

In previous years, Corps engineer visits to schools during National Engineers Week have been for bridge design, in which the competitive element

was how much weight could be loaded on the model structure before it fails.

One of the Walla Walla District engineers doing the trebuchet tour of schools in February was Danielle Stephens, a civil engineer and Oregon State alumnus.



Stephens

"I think it's a great way for us to interact with the community and get younger individuals interested in engineering and sciences and the mechanics of how things work," Stephens said.

Stephens' engineering career with Walla Walla District is only 3 ½ years old, so she might be considered one of the youthful engineers slinging boulders of success at the Corps castle walls to gain entry to positions of greater responsibility.

In conjunction with the start of National Engineers Week, the foundation



organizing the observance announced its selection of New Faces of Engineering, 15 youthful engineers who are energizing their profession as role models to still-younger people looking at making engineering their career. Stephens was one of this year's candidates to make the final list from the foundation's New Faces selection board. Nominees must be less than 30 years old and must be in careers less than five years after earning their

Walla Walla District Top of engineers, grow new ones.

Nurturing an engineering career



photo: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Steve Purdy, left, Albuquerque District, and Danielle Stephens discuss a new sewer line for a Baghdad neighborhood in 2004.

academic degrees.

Stephens' nomination recalled she was one of the Corps' first engineers to volunteer for duty in Iraq, where she worked on water and sewage projects. She also served several months in the aftermath of

Hurricane Katrina, helping communities restore infrastructure. As a

structural engineer, Stephens is responsible for inspection of hydraulic steel structures at NWW projects, and she has experience using

fiberglass reinforcement for fish passage structures. She graduated from Walla

Walla District's Leadership Development Program on April 16.

"I think there's a lot of diversity and opportunity that you have here that you might not have either with other agencies or in the private sector," Stephens said.

Stephens' entry to Walla Walla District was via the Engineer in Training (EIT) program, a Corps-wide initiative to recruit graduating engineering students and prepare them for their particular taskings in each Corps district.

"Engineer in Training is in a class of its own in the industry," said Walla Walla District's John Brennan, who helps administer the program. "It's a two-year program that shows them everything from the conception of a project to its design. They get to be a part of that team and then they see how cost estimates are developed, for example. They get to be part of the construction, quality assurance and contract administration. They spend time at our dams, seeing how they operate and how they're maintained. So they get the big perspective of everything an engineer does for the Corps. It's a really big investment in them as young engineers."



John Brennan

Brennan says very special working relationships develop between the young graduate engineers and the older cadre.

"I'd say the relationships that form are congenial both ways," Brennan said. "The new guys are appreciative for the insight

they gain from the mentors, and the mentors are appreciative of the help they get from the younger guys."

"The Corps itself is something you're not going to learn in school," said Cary Rahn, Walla Walla District's Chief of Electrical Design, who is one of many

District engineers doing the mentoring of young graduates.

"We have unique business processes and engineering challenges. Being able to recruit these folks at an early age and provide them with a diverse background, gives them insights where they fit in, and where we can best utilize their skill sets.

It's a great training opportunity because it's something they're never going to learn without on-the-job experience."

"The Corps has great mentors with a lot of experience," Stephens said, "which is part of our problem because they're all ready to retire. So you're trying to soak in all the knowledge you can get from them."



Cary Rahn



photo: Steve Hall, EIT Coordinator

The latest class of Engineers in Training got to see what Unit #2 at Lower Granite Lock and Dam powerhouse looks like without its rotor on March 28.

McNary debuts new type spillway weir



An employee of Tri-State Metal Fab keeps an eye on a prototype temporary spillway weir as a crane moves it to spillway #20 at McNary Lock and Dam on March 6.

photos: Rick Haverinen

By Gina Baltrusch

The first of two prototype surface-bypass structures was installed March 6 at McNary Lock and Dam.

The temporary spillway weir, or TSW, will be used for research to develop valuable information for improving passage conditions for out-migrating juvenile salmon and steelhead in the Columbia River, said Project Manager Kevin Crum.

The prototype weir will allow flexibility in

testing to help determine the best location and flow to attract juvenile fish to the bypass entrance, said Ken Hansen, hydraulic engineer for the project. "The information we gather in testing will help us make informed decisions in consideration of permanent surface bypass systems for McNary," Hansen said.

Tri-State Metal Fab Inc. of Spokane, Wash., was awarded the contract in December to build a prototype spillway weir at McNary Dam. The Corps exercised contract options for a second, modified temporary weir bringing the total contract value to about \$2.5 million. Unlike the huge, 10 story-tall, one-piece surface bypass structures installed at Lower Granite and Ice Harbor dams, the temporary spillway weirs are shipped in sections and assembled during installation. The first weir was installed in spillway bay 20, and initial biological testing has already begun. The second temporary weir was installed into spillway bay 22, after considering the results of hydraulic and biological analysis.

The TSW is about 35-feet high, 50-feet wide and weighs about 250,000 pounds. It can be fitted into any of McNary's 22 spillway bays. The temporary structure has a low relative cost, is easier to implement and allows for flexible biological testing.

Come hither, fish headed home...



photo: Kyle DeSomber, mechanical engineer, Walla Walla District

It requires a lot of current to lure spawning adult fish headed home to swim up a fish ladder. This is one of three 3000-horsepower electric motors that provide the attraction at McNary Dam. Each motor drives a pump capable of moving water at 2500 cubic feet per minute. Knight Construction and Supply workers returned the motor to work Feb. 23 after a bad pump bearing developed into an extensive overhaul.



Enn Kotkas of Normandeau Associates drops a tagged juvenile salmon into a delivery tube to test the new spillway weir at McNary Dam March 19.

Granite fish trap open for business



photo: Rick Haverinen

Jerry Harmon, a fisheries research biologist for National Marine Fisheries Service, walks a female steelhead from the anaesthesia tank to the recovery tank at the new adult fish trap facility at Lower Granite Lock and Dam April 3.

By Rick Haverinen

The practical side of handling returning adult salmon and steelhead should be easier on the fish and those doing the work at Lower Granite Lock and Dam.

Construction of a new adult fish trap system was completed March 1 at the dam on the Lower Snake River.

The process diverts a selection of adult fish entering the dam's fish ladder and directs them to a tank where they are anesthetized with oil of cloves. NOAA Fisheries employees then examine the fish and place them in another tank where they recover from the anesthesia. From this point they are either returned to the river or placed into holding tanks for later truck transport to hatcheries.

Karen Robison, a civil engineer in Walla Walla District's Geotechnical Design Section, managed the project, which was funded around \$2.1 million by Bonneville Power Authority.

"The improvements were requested by NOAA Fisheries and the Nez Perce Tribe to help mitigate (decreases in numbers) in

the salmon runs and to improve the collection facilities for the hatcheries," Robison said.

The facility is an upgrade of the former system at the dam.

"We have enlarged the physical trap area," Robison said. "There is more work area for the people who are handling the fish and there are more tanks that are larger so we can hold more fish."

Robison said the new system triples the former tank capacity.

"Our goal is 6,000 fish annually,"

Robison said. "It depends a lot on the run and how many fish they put in a tank. It can vary quite a bit."

The collected adult fish can be transported by truck to hatcheries operated by the Nez Perce Tribe, or the hatchery at Lyon's Ferry, to breed juvenile fish.

The new work adds sorting tanks that the previous system did not include. Fish are able to swim from the sorting tank into the holding tanks, eliminating one step of manual handling.

"We have a lot more room than we did before," said Jerry Harmon, fisheries research biologist for National Marine Fisheries Service, the agency that actually uses the facility. "In addition to our anesthetic tanks, we also have two sorting tanks, and they allow us to handle many more fish than we could in the past. And we can hold adults in six tanks instead of the two that we had before. It gives the truckers a little more leeway when they're transporting fish back to the hatchery."

Funding for the new facility was obtained during spring 2005. The work was divided by two separate contractors. One handled the preliminary design work and the second was selected to finalize the design work and do the construction.



Karen Robison

Blade Runner



photo: Dan Forge, Clarkston Construction Branch

Employees of Dix Construction dropped the turbine runner for Unit #2 back into its home at Lower Granite Lock and Dam on Feb. 24. Besides the usual blade cavitation repair work, the turbine hub got new high-tech greaseless blade bushings.

Public has say in Sediment Management Plan



photo: Rick Haverinen

Dale Lentz, right, a Walla Walla District civil engineer, talks with Burney Hill, an Environmental Protection Agency aquatic environmental scientist, in Clarkston Feb. 15.

Members of the public are contributing much to the input for Walla Walla District's Programmatic Sediment Management Plan (PMSP).

Toward that end, project manager Carl Christianson hosted public scoping sessions in February in Clarkston, Wash., Boise, LaGrande, Ore., and Portland.

The PSMP will include an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that will address sediment management within the four lower Snake River reservoirs and the portion of McNary reservoir within the lower Snake River.

Sediment management has been an ongoing maintenance issue since the completion of Ice Harbor Dam. Sedimentation issues have historically been handled on a case-by-case basis, primarily by dredging. However, the Corps believes that this ongoing problem can best be handled by evaluating sediment management throughout the entire system, as well as on a watershed basis.

The planned PSMP/EIS will identify and evaluate ways to manage sediment accumulation within the lower Snake

River reservoirs, and will examine the sources and transportation of sediment. The study will determine the most effective ways to reduce sediment build-up, manage it once it reaches the reservoirs, and identify possible changes to structures or operations to reduce maintenance issues while still providing all authorized project purposes.

The study area extends from the mouth of the Snake River upstream to the communities of Lewiston, Idaho, and Clarkston, Wash. It also includes the lower two miles of the Clearwater River, from its confluence with the Snake River in Lewiston, upstream to the U.S. Highway 12 Bridge. All tributaries that significantly contribute sediment to the lower Snake River will also be included in the study.

Although the Corps does not have authority to manage lands outside of reservoir project boundaries, management strategies for non-Corps property will be identified and evaluated.

The scoping sessions held in February were designed to give agencies, tribes, stakeholders, and the public an opportunity to help define the scope, alternatives, and data collection and analysis for an all-inclusive sediment management plan.

A draft EIS is scheduled for release in fall 2009. The final EIS is scheduled for release in fall 2010.

Feathered families find flats



photo: Doug Helman, park ranger, McNary Dam

Ashton Peterson, left, and Tyler Wilson install a bird house at McNary Lock and Dam's Spillway Park. They and Aaron and Brandon Hallam, all Boy Scouts from Sand Stone Troop 603 in Hermiston, Ore., built 12 houses for wren-like birds and another 12 for robin-like birds on Feb. 10, and still had enough daylight left to install six of the new bird homes.

Dworshak site for SWAT training



photo: Donna Bryant, ranger, Dworshak Dam

The Dworshak Dam visitor center was crime-free as the Clearwater Sheriff's Dept. and Orofino Police Dept. Tactical Team conducted a search exercise Feb. 13. Team members are Cpl. Guy Cordle, Sgt. Jeff Wilson, Sgt. Anne Kelleher, Sgt. Mitch Jared, Deputy Zach Ward, and Cpl. Eric Dodge. Deputy Randy Herman is the team commander.

Record walleye snagged



photo: Paul Hoffarth, Washington Dept. Fish and Wildlife

Mike Hepper, a Richland angler, holds his State of Washington record-setting 19.3-pound walleye taken Feb. 5 from the Columbia River above McNary Dam. It was 33.7 inches long, with a girth of 22.24 inches. The previous record walleye was 18.9 pounds, caught in 2002 below John Day pool.

Mike Hepper, a veteran angler from Richland, has set a new state record for the largest walleye caught in state waters, the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) has confirmed.

Hepper, 64, caught the 19.3-pound walleye Feb. 5 on the Columbia River above McNary Dam, and had its weight certified that day at a meat market in Pasco.

The fish was 33.7 inches long, with a girth of 22.24 inches, said Paul Hoffarth, a WDFW fish biologist who verified the catch.

The state's previous record was an 18.9-pound walleye caught downriver in the John Day pool in 2002.

"The mid-Columbia River is widely recognized as one of the best places in the nation to catch walleye," said Keith Underwood, WDFW gamefish records coordinator.

Hepper, a retired high school teacher, said he has been fishing most of his life, specializing in walleye fishing for nearly four decades. He caught his 19.3-pounder on a spinner-and-worm combination.

"It's great to get the record, but I know there's a bigger one out there," he said.

The largest member of the perch family, walleye are a popular gamefish throughout North America.

Story provided by Washington Dept. of Fish and Wildlife.

INITIATIVES, from Page 2

challenges and it has not always been easy. Required training will be forthcoming for our remaining workforce as we transition to the next spiral.

4. A-76 implementation: The formal announcement was made, so we'll have to adjust accordingly to the new organizational structure.

5. Contracting Transformation: Is still in its infant changes. Headquarters will provide guidance on the various changes discussed recently during the March Town Hall.

So, do we have challenges? Yes. Are we moving in the right direction? Definitely. Our leaders are aware of these challenges and will continue to work with each of you to overcome them while still accomplishing routine missions.

In summary, focus on our District priorities, continue to do the great job you always do, and plan for the additional challenges outlined here.

I'm proud of you all—thanks for your great service to OUR District and Nation—and keep moving forward!

Lt. Col. Tony Hofmann
District Commander

Walla Walla District journalists score in USACE competition

Walla Walla District writers and photographers received seven awards in the 2006 Herbert A. Kassner Journalism Awards in judging held Feb. 12 at Headquarters, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, in Washington, D.C.

Ten other awards went to Northwestern Division districts, making the division total 17, plus one honorable mention.

The Walla Walla District publication Intercom was awarded second place in the magazine category.

Gina Baltrusch was awarded second place in sports writing, and third place in the stand-alone photo category.

Rick Haverinen was awarded second place in the stand-alone photo category and third place in the photojournalism category.

Walla Walla District dominated the photo contribution by a stringer category with second place going to Tony Sijohn and third place going to Rick Grubb.

Three district awards went to Europe, Savannah, and Honolulu districts.

Two awards each went to Baltimore District, Transatlantic Programs Center, and Engineering and Support Center, Huntsville.

NSPS mock pay pool slated for April 30-May 4 gives process preview

The Walla Walla District is taking the next steps in the National Security Personnel System (NSPS) process by holding a mock Pay pool starting on April 30. This will help prepare employees, rating officials, senior reviewers, pay pool panel and managers for the actual pay pool process that occurs during October and November.

"We will use the lessons learned in

the mock pay poll process to help us streamline our procedures when we do the actual pay pool in October," said Donna Street, the NSPS transition manager.

NSPS is designed to increase effectiveness through a simplified personnel management system that improves the way it hires, assigns, compensates and rewards employees.

The District's supervisors transitioned to NSPS in January. The District will schedule a series of workshops in the fall to prepare the transition for the rest of the workforce non-bargaining population.

Employees seeking more information are encouraged to review the NSPS Website and take NSPS 101 training at <http://www.cpms.osd.mil/nsps/>.



photo: Deb Norton, Stringer, Dworshak Dam

John Horrell, a graphic services provider, paints a personal flotation device at the Bruce's Eddy boat ramp in early May 2006. The attention-getting messages were one reason Deb Norton was selected for a water safety award.

by Rick Haverinen

A Dworshak Dam park ranger has received national recognition by being presented with a regional award for her water safety program.

Deb Norton went to San Antonio March 7 to receive an Award of Merit at a joint meeting of the National Water Safety Congress and National Safe Boating Council.



Mike Deitrick

Deitrick, about his decision to nominate her for the award.

"What I liked about her nomination is that it really showed creativity in getting the water safety message out there," said Randy Henry, Region 6 Vice President of the National Water Safety Congress, and the official who selected Norton for her honor.

Region 6 includes the states of Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, Colorado and Alaska.

Size probably made an impression on Henry, as he liked the 18 by 15-foot life jackets Norton had painted on the pavement near four Dworshak boat ramps with the

message, "Wear it for life."

"This was one of those ideas that was, 'Why didn't I think of that?'" Henry said.

Norton also revamped a water safety display room at the Dworshak Visitor Center, moving it to a more-frequented location on the second floor. The room has various sizes and styles of life jackets visitors can try on, and a larger-than-life-sized plush toy version of Bobber the Water Safety Dog beckons kids to join him in his boat.

"The kids really enjoy getting into the boat with him," Norton said, "and since the dog's wearing a life jacket, then they want to wear a life jacket."

Henry also cited Norton's development of lifejacket loaner kiosks, billboards with water safety slogans and slide shows as factors that gave her the edge in receiving the award.



Randy Henry

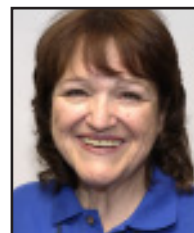
Norton has also taken to the airwaves at the local Orofino radio station and the park's low-power transmitter to promote water safety.

She also has presented the water safety message at schools, trade shows and county fairs.

"We're going to give out water-

watcher cards at the beach this summer," Norton said, "and it's for adults that are watching their children in the water. It means, 'I see that you're really watching your child in the water and I appreciate that.'"

Although Norton received a regional award, the impact is truly national as convention attendees share their water safety innovations with each other.



Lynda Nutt

"There's a lot of interest," Henry said. "People like to see new ideas. When somebody comes up with a good idea, we're not so proud that we can't steal it."

Lynda Nutt, who manages the Corps' national water safety program, said the park rangers are a great asset to promote caution.

"They are the lifeblood of the program," said Nutt. "The ideas come from the field rangers. They're the ones creating innovative ways to reach the customer. If it was not for their understanding of the audience that we're trying to talk to, we would not be able to do what we do on a national scale."

The four-day conference in San Antonio attracted 411 delegates from multiple federal and state agencies. Foreign interest included Canada and the United Kingdom.



photo: Donna Bryant, park ranger, Dworshak Dam

Park Ranger Deb Norton and Emma Parker go for a "boat ride" with Bobber in the water safety room at Dworshak Visitor Center.